Reading Response

I found a common feeling to the students Nathan described in Chapter 3 of “My Freshman Year”. This summer my freshman class was required to complete an online “summer reading assignment” on BOLT, intended to have the same effect as the one in the book. Initially, I was upset that I would have to be reading something mandatory over my summer, but it turned out to not be reading at all. It was watching videos and writing responses to questions. Even though I got lucky, I remember thinking how I could never enjoy a book I was forced to read just because of the fact that I was forced to read it. A lot of the students in “My Freshman Year” seemed to feel the same. I think people my age feel this way because we like to read things that interest us, and if something is forced upon us we automatically feel the need to rebel. One thing I didn’t quite understand was why when the RA’s tried to do things the residents said they wanted to do, nobody showed. It makes sense why we don’t want to do something we are *forced* to do. However when we say we *want* to do something, it is a mystery to me why we do not do that either. Perhaps my generation is just lazy and anti-social. Or maybe it is because we really do not know what we want.

In “The Mind at Work”, I found particular interest in the introduction. The way the author wrote so eloquently about everything he had learned from the people in his family was very attention-grabbing. I personally do not know any grown adults that are waitresses, or work on a railroad, so it was interesting to see what kind of work they do and what it requires to be good at what they do. I liked how the author included the lingo and made a point to explain how crucial the lingo is to doing the job well. The thought-provoking part that I never really thought about until now was that these big corporations that work with electronics or in law seem to be what society considers the “hard” or “smart” jobs. When in reality, being a waitress or a person who works on a railroad can be just as hard and require a lot of smarts. Without knowing “tricks of the trade”, it is hard to be good at these jobs. I just thought it was interesting how society doesn’t recognize that.